

MINUTES OF THE  
MAG 9-1-1 OVERSIGHT TEAM MEETING

November 29, 2005  
MAG Office Building, Cholla Room  
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Harry Beck, Mesa Fire Department, Chair	Helen Gandara-Zavala, Scottsdale Police Department
* Mark Burdick, Glendale Fire Department	Jay Spradling, Tempe Police Department
Steve Werner, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office	Lawrence Rodriguez, Tolleson Police Department
# Mike Fusco, Emergency Management, Peoria	Liz Hunt for the Phoenix Fire Department
Dave Faulkner, Phoenix Police Department	

\* Those members neither present nor represented by proxy.

# Attended by telephone conference call.

+ Attended by videoconference call.

OTHERS PRESENT

Mike Benjamin, Phoenix Fire Department	Barbara Jaeger, State 911 Office
Valerie Day, MAG	Sandra Junck
Dave Eaton, Phoenix Fire Department	Tom Melton, Scottsdale
Mary Franklin, Phoenix Fire Department	Mary Millard, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
	Chris Nadeau, Goodyear

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Harry Beck, at 2:10 p.m. He introduced the new Chair of the PSAP Managers Group, Chris Nadeau, Goodyear. Chairman Beck stated that Mike Fusco was joining the meeting via teleconference call.

2. Call to the Audience

An opportunity is provided to the public to address the 911 Oversight Team on items that are not on the agenda that are within the jurisdiction of MAG, or non-action agenda items that are on the agenda for discussion or information only. Citizens will be requested not to exceed a three minute time period for their comments. A total of 15 minutes will be provided for the Call to the Audience agenda item, unless the Oversight Team requests an exception to this limit. Opportunities for comment on items posted for action are provided at the time the item is heard. Chairman Beck noted that no public comment cards had been turned in.

3. Approval of the August 16, 2005 Meeting Minutes

Chief Rodriguez moved to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2005 meeting. Mr. Fusco seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. MAG FY 2007 PSAP Annual Element/Funding Request Amendment

Mary Franklin reported that the MAG 9-1-1 Office is requesting to amend the budget for items that were not approved in the FY 2007 funding request because actual costs were unknown at the time the budget was approved. She added that requests normally are submitted by the PSAPs, but in this situation, the request is coming from the 9-1-1 Office. Ms. Franklin stated that the amendment includes upgrades of the computerized telephone 9-1-1 systems at Tempe Police Department for \$441,000, Mesa Police Department for \$804,000, Glendale Police Department for \$441,000 and El Mirage Police Department for \$118,300. The current equipment's warranties and support have expired and should be replaced. The 9-1-1 Office is also requesting \$45,000 for a Positron MIS tool that will provide systemwide call reporting. These costs are currently paid by the 9-1-1 state excise tax. Ms. Franklin stated that the Oversight Team is requested to make a recommendation on the amendment to the MAG Management Committee.

Mr. Fusco moved to recommend approval of the FY 2007 PSAP Annual Element/ Funding Request Amendment. Chief Spradling seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

6. Update on the Community Emergency Notification System (CENS)

This agenda item was taken out of order.

Liz Hunt provided an update on the CENS program. She reported that 38 activations have taken place so far this calendar year, the largest number of any of Intrado's clients. Ms. Hunt advised that the no-cost, 50,000 call allowance for missing children has almost been depleted. She stated that she will be providing an end-of-year report to members of the Oversight Team and the PSAP Managers Group. Ms. Hunt stated that these activations cost \$25,208, which were charged back to the activating agencies. She commented on the expiration date of the contract with Qwest and said that CENS funds are projected to last until January 2007. Ms. Hunt mentioned various options for continuing service with the Intellicast system.

Chairman Beck commented that during the hurricane situations, he heard many comments that it was reassuring for our region to have the CENS system to use as a tool during an evacuation. He noted that this is a vote of confidence for the system. Ms. Hunt commented that New Orleans had cancelled its emergency notification system three weeks prior to Hurricane Katrina because of cost. She commented that she did not want this region to be in that position because of funding concerns.

Barbara Jaeger asked if any projections had been made as to what it would cost communities to support CENS. Ms. Hunt replied that if the costs were split out on a per agency basis, it would cost each agency \$1,500 per month for the maintenance fee. She added that if a lower monthly maintenance fee was negotiated, the cost per agency could decrease. Ms. Hunt also mentioned the concern that a small city would pay the same as a large city. She commented that activation events are not depleting the CENS fund because agencies now pay for their activations; it is the monthly maintenance fee. Ms. Jaeger suggested informing member agencies of potential costs now because they are beginning their 2007 budget processes. She asked if there had been discussions on alternate funding. Ms. Hunt said that the process for Homeland Security funding is very lengthy.

Chief Werner commented that public health money could be used in a public health outbreak. He said that FEMA provides several million dollars per year for this. Chief Werner commented that CENS has been put into the rough draft of the plan and they feel it would be one mode of notification that would be utilized. He said that an outbreak is incident driven. Chief Werner stated that he would like to have a table-top demonstration set up for early 2006 in which CENS would be an instrumental part. Ms. Hunt commented that the Flood Control District appreciates having CENS for their plan.

Chairman Beck commented on previous discussions on self-maintenance of the database at a lower cost. Ms. Hunt stated that the database could be purchased at a cost of \$15,000 to \$18,000 per month, but would include a monthly update only, not a daily update as we have now.

Chairman Beck asked if there had been discussion of funding for a statewide system. Ms. Jaeger commented that statewide system legislation could not happen this session. The goal is not to increase tax this year because it is an election year and any increase would require a two-thirds vote. She said that it would be an increase based on how the legislation is written. Ms. Jaeger also stated that there is no way this can be brought forward now because the tax decrease and VoIP issues are being discussed.

Chairman Beck directed that a planning document be put together on costs associated with continuing the CENS program. He said that the Management Committee and Regional Council would want to know if the program has been operated cost effectively, if alternative funding sources on an ongoing basis had been researched, and what has been pursued at the Legislature.

Ms. Jaeger stated that the Legislature had asked her office the costs to implement the program statewide. She said that the funding deficit is not short-term; the one percent administrative cost will also be reduced, which affects the GIS program, among others.

Chief Spradling stated that the costs need to be conveyed to the PSAPs now. He said that not all will agree to pay into the system. Chief Spradling commented that here is a potential for embarrassment if CENS ceases to operate and there is an incident.

Chairman Beck stated that there may be a separate bill on a statewide system.

Chief Werner stated that this falls under state interoperability. He said that Frank Navarette, the Arizona Office of Homeland Security Director, might be interested. He said that the State only has 2-1-1, which is not operational yet, and the closest we have is CENS. Chief Werner commented on the potential that there are funds out there for this.

Chief Spradling asked the level of changes to the database in a month. Ms. Hunt replied that for existing neighborhoods, there are not significant changes, but daily updates would be important where new subdivisions are being built.

Ms. Jaeger commented that she was on the team that evaluated the responses to the Request for Proposals for CENS. She indicated that the fact that MAG 9-1-1 was chosen was based on frequent updates to the database. Ms. Jaeger expressed that there is liability if it is not updated and legal advice would need to be consulted if there was a change in the process.

Chairman Beck noted the legal consultations when the CENS process was first begun. He noted that MAG 9-1-1 has a highly accurate database and he would like to start with an efficiency evaluation. Chairman Beck stated that there is a certain amount of risk, the database can change hourly and we need to balance that risk. Chairman Beck stated that the CENS fund is running out of money, and options need to be presented to the Management Committee and Regional Council.

Ms. Hunt stated that she would follow up on the interest aspect of the account.

Ms. Jaeger commented that one issue is that not all VoIP providers are included in the CENS database. She added that there are always these types of issues with new technology. She added that cell phones are also not included in the CENS database.

Ms. Hunt stated that she would get the report out to the committee that would include projections and alternatives. Chairman Beck stated that finance options need to be accompanied by alternatives being pursued so we can demonstrate due diligence.

7. Wireless Phase I and II Implementation

Ms. Hunt stated that Phase I and Phase II in the MAG region was completed with the final vendor, Cingular Wireless, prior to Thanksgiving. She added that they are getting ready to close the implementation part. Ms. Hunt stated that she will be organizing a press conference to inform the citizens of implementation.

8. Maintenance of the 9-1-1 Equipment

Mike Benjamin updated the committee on maintenance of the 9-1-1 equipment. He stated that staff continues to manage the current project load. They are wrapping up wireless and doing site upgrades to Positron equipment and removing Plant equipment. Mr. Benjamin stated that they are exploring Phoenix Police and Fire having two active sites. He said that they need places for additional staff. Mr. Benjamin stated that this has not required budget requests, and they have been able to move things internally. Mr. Benjamin reported that project requests consistently remain at a high rate.

Chairman Beck asked the time frame for the Paradise Valley and Phoenix projects. Mr. Benjamin replied that Paradise Valley is in the works, with implementation in early January 2006. Phoenix Police and Fire implementation is anticipated in early 2006. Chairman Beck commented that having two Phoenix sites is a positive step and will make the system more robust.

Mr. Benjamin referred to discussion at the last Oversight meeting regarding consolidation vs. co-location. He said they continue to look at being positioned to have a regional site in the West Valley and one in the East Valley, in addition to the two Phoenix sites. Mr. Benjamin commented that this represents more responsible use of 9-1-1 funds and it is more reliable for communications to have backup sites in case one goes down.

Chairman Beck said that it would be disastrous if the system went down. He noted that the Sheriff's Office used to be the backup. Phoenix is a huge component so any cascade from a shutdown would be hard to manage. Chairman Beck stated that it is time to update the five-year plan to look at issues and set goals. Chairman Beck stated that elected officials have asked him about Internet 9-1-1. At

this point, it is nothing we have dealt with because it has not been a high volume issue. However, it is coming, like cell phones did. Chairman Beck stated that a task force be formed which would solicit participation from the Oversight Team and the PSAP Managers. Ms. Hunt stated that she would send out a message to the Oversight Team and PSAP Managers regarding the task force. Chairman Beck suggested bringing a shopping list of priorities and needs that could be discussed by the Oversight Team. Mr. Fusco commented on how the last five-year plan was very aggressive and direct.

5. Discussion of the Tax for the Emergency Telecommunications Revolving Fund

Since 1983, the State has funded 9-1-1 telecommunications services statewide with a monthly excise tax on telephone services. The current rate is 37 cents per each activated wire and wireless service account. A.R.S 42-5252 A(2) says that for the fiscal year beginning June 30, 2006 to July 1, 2007, 28 cents per month will be collected. The legislation further decreases the monthly rate to 20 cents beginning June 30, 2007. According to an analysis by the State 9-1-1 Office, the statewide fund will be in a deficit by 2008.

Chairman Beck introduced Sandra Junck Carpenter, who has been involved with the MAG 9-1-1 system for many years. Ms. Junck stated that Arizona State Senator Dean Martin, Chairman of the Finance Committee, has agreed to sponsor a bill to return the \$15 million that was swept from the State 9-1-1 fund to balance the State's General Fund a few years ago. She added that he is also considering asking that interest be included. Ms. Junck stated that if this bill is successful, it would delay the projected deficit by one year, to 2009. She said that she had also had discussions with him about expanding the tax from just cell and land line phones to apply to new technologies, such as VoIP.

Chairman Beck asked Ms. Junck about ongoing funding for CENS statewide. Ms. Junck replied that there was no commitment for additional areas, but the door is open to have that discussion. She commented that it is important to tie CENS to Homeland Security. Ms. Junck also said that Representative Steve Huffman, Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, might also be contacted. She noted that the cell phone companies are supporting the return of the \$15 million to the 9-1-1 fund.

Chief Werner stated that there is one crisis that is predictable, and that is fire. He added that CENS would be a useful tool when the season starts in February/March.

Chairman Beck stated that this gives us time to put a five-year plan together. He stated that he was present at the Fire Chief's conference. One of the materials handed out showed the efficient data of Arizona 9-1-1 compared to other states.

Ms. Jaeger stated that MAG 9-1-1 has a second selective router to ensure redundancy. She said that Frank Navarette had asked her about the redundancy issue and she told him there was none because MAG had a second router.

Ms. Junck stated that we need to emphasize the importance of a dedicated monthly tax, and not funding from the general fund. She said that the tax is really a surcharge for usage.

Chairman Beck asked what member agencies could do to enable efforts. Ms. Junck stated that at some point when the bill is heard, member agency representatives could testify or indicate by signing up electronically. Chairman Beck suggested having a fact sheet. Ms. Junck stated that they have a variety of papers that they will be assembling with the bill.

Chairman Beck stated that this information could be distributed at the firefighters' luncheon on the Mall for legislators. Ms. Junck added that the City of Phoenix also hosts a breakfast for its legislators. Ms. Jaeger noted that if the bill is successful, it would be the first time in the country that swept funds would be returned.

Chairman Beck stated that the State 9-1-1 fund is for equipment and software based expenses. He said that one thing being considered was to use the State 9-1-1 fund for a statewide communication system, but that could endanger 9-1-1. Chairman Beck thanked Ms. Junck for attending the meeting.

9. Update on the MAG 9-1-1 Administrator Position

Chairman Beck stated that four candidates were interviewed for the MAG 9-1-1 Administrator position and the decision is still under review.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.